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State of New Jersey

Christine Todd Whitman, U.S.E.P.A.
Governor REMOVAL AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS PROGRAMS

Department of Environmental Protection

Robert C. Shinn, Jr.
Commissioner

Kathleen C. Callahan, Director
Emergency and Remedial Response Division
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region II
26 Federal Plaza
New York, New York 10278

Dear Director Callahan:

Re: Removal Request - Haller Testing Laboratories, Inc.
336 Leland Avenue
Plainfield City, Union County

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (Department) hereby submits the Haller Testing Company site ("site") for CERCLA removal action consideration. The following information details the case history and supports the removal request.

The site is located in a mixed industrial and residential area of Plainfield City, Union County. It is approximately 0.5 acres in size and is bordered to the northeast by Watson Avenue, to the southeast by residential properties and Specialty Companies, Inc., to the southwest by Leland Avenue and to the northwest by A & E Cutter Corp. and residential properties. The site is designated as Block 405, Lots 7 and 14 on the municipal tax map of the City of Plainfield. Haller Testing Laboratories, Inc. is listed as the owner of record by the City of Plainfield.

Haller Testing Laboratories, Inc. operated at the site from approximately 1927 to January 1993 as a research and test laboratory of materials used in construction and engineering. In December 1992, the Federal Government placed a lien against the property for failure to pay federal taxes. Operations ceased in January 1993 and the buildings are currently vacant.

On August 29, 1985 the Department conducted an inspection of the site as part of a ground water investigation of the Plainfield City industrial area. During the inspection it was observed that waste water from the sink in the asphalt testing room and the wetroom floor drains discharged into an unlined subsurface drainage pit on the northwest side of the facility. In addition, the sinks in the chemistry lab and the slop sink in the testing machine room were also found to discharge into an unlined subsurface drainage pit located on the southeast side of the facility. It was also noted during the inspection that the facility used 1,1,1-trichloroethane to dissolve asphalt samples and hydrochloric acid to wash concrete samples.

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On June 21, 1993, a Pre-Sampling Assessment was conducted by Department personnel from the Bureau of Field Operations - Site Assessment (BFO-SA). The report indicates two buildings are located on the site. The main building, which is constructed of brick and masonry, was locked and not accessible, however, two 55-gallon drums were observed on the rear porch of the building. One drum, labeled 1,1,1 trichloroethane, was half-full and the other drum, labeled hazardous waste, was observed to be full of material. The second building was not secured and an inspection of the interior revealed the presence of a radioactive source, an unregistered moisture density gauge. A radiation meter indicated readings of 50 micro Roentgens/hour (uR/hr) emanating from the source. Background radiation was detected at approximately 20 uR/hr.

On September 8, 1993 the BFO-SA collected 14 soil samples from various areas of the site including, the probable locations of the drainage pit areas, a concrete pad along the porch, an above ground fuel oil tank and several other locations identified as possible areas of concern. Analysis of the samples revealed elevated levels of base/neutral compounds and metals. Sample S-3 was collected at a depth of 1 foot and revealed the presence of mercury at 47.7 ppm, which exceeds the NJDEP Soil Cleanup Criteria of 14 ppm for mercury.

Numerous enforcement documents (i.e. Directives, Administrative Orders and Notice of Prosecution) were issued to Mr. Haller by the Department from September, 1985 to January, 1993. There is no evidence that any remedial activity has been conducted at the site. (See Attachment)

The Department views the storage of drums of hazardous substances and the presence of a radioactive source at the site to be a threat to the nearby population. Also of concern is the presence of mercury in a surface soil sample taken at the site. The nearest residence is located immediately adjacent to the property and the site is easily accessible to the public. In addition, the potential exists for additional hazardous materials to be stored within the locked building at the site.

The Department therefore requests that EPA sample, characterize and dispose of all hazardous substances found at the site in such a way as to safeguard the local population, and perform any necessary investigatory and remedial work at the site as deemed appropriate.

Should your staff require additional information please have them contact Janet M. Smolenski of the Bureau of Field Operations, Case Assignment Section at (609) 292-2943.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Van Fossen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Robert Van Fossen
Assistant Director
Discharge Response Element

Attachment

c: Richard Salkie, Associate Director, Removal and Emergency Preparedness Program, USEPA
George Zachos, Branch Chief, Removal Action Branch, Removal and Emergency Preparedness Program, USEPA
Mike Tompkins, Bureau Chief, Bureau of Field Operations
Janet Smolenski, EPA Removal Action Coordinator, Bureau of Field Operations - Case Assignment Section

PART XI: PREVIOUS OR ONGOING REMEDIAL ACTIONS

Discuss for each media all previous and ongoing remedial activities at the site. Include why initiated, type of action, date and present status.

There is no evidence in the available documentation of there ever being a remedial action conducted at the site.

PART XII: ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS

1. **Type of enforcement activity:** Directive
Issuing agent: NJDEP, Division of Water Resources (DWR)
Date: September 16, 1985
Description of violation: Violation of New Jersey Water Pollution Control Act by discharging waste water without a permit. Mr. Haller was directed to cease all unpermitted discharges and to provide access for the sampling of the drainage pits. (Attachment C)

Follow-up activity: Mr. Haller did not respond to the Directive. On November 27, 1985 another Directive was issued to Haller for failure to reply to the September 16, 1985 Directive. A response to the November 27, 1985 Directive was never received by the NJDEP.

2. **Type of enforcement activity:** Directive
Issuing agent: NJDEP, DWR
Date: March 13, 1986
Description of violation: Haller was directed to immediately cease the unpermitted discharges to the drainage pits and to remove and properly dispose of the sludge contained in the pit on the southeast side of the building. (Attachment D)

Follow-up activity: Mr. Haller did not respond to the Directive.

3. **Type of enforcement activity:** Order
Issuing agent: NJDEP, Division of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
Date: March 19, 1986
Description of violation: Failure to conduct leak tests on the moisture density gauges at intervals not longer than 6 months pursuant to the provisions of the Radiation Protection Act. (Attachment E)

Follow-up activity: There was no follow-up activity evident in the documentation.

4. **Type of enforcement activity:** Directive
Issuing agent: NJDEP, DWR
Date: May 30, 1986
Description of violation: Mr. Haller was identified as a probable contributor to the ground water contamination in the

Plainfield area. Mr. Haller was directed to submit a work plan for a soil boring investigation. (Attachment G)

Follow-up activity: There was no follow-up activity evident in the documentation.

5. Type of enforcement activity: Directive

Issuing agent: NJDEP, DWR

Date: June 6, 1986

Description of violation: A Directive was issued to Mr. Haller by NJDEP to initiate a soil boring program and submit a work plan by July 8, 1986. (Attachment I-4)

Follow-up activity: Neither the workplan nor a response have ever been received by the NJDEP.

6. Type of enforcement activity: Administrative Order and-Notice of Civil Administrative Penalty Assessment

Issuing agent: NJDEP, DWR

Date: May 21, 1987

Description of violation: The enforcement activity required that Mr. Haller immediately cease all unpermitted discharges from the facility; remove and dispose all contaminated materials from the drainage pit; submit a draft hydrogeologic remedial investigation work plan; and submit payment of a civil administrative penalty of \$5,000. (Attachment I)

Follow-up activity: Mr. Haller did not respond to the enforcement document. The case was referred to the Office of the Attorney General for legal action.

7. Type of enforcement activity: Administrative Order

Issuing agent: NJDEP, DEQ

Date: September 17, 1987

Description of violation: Possession of radioactive materials without a valid New Jersey license and failure to comply to survey the instrument calibrations within the 6-month intervals pursuant to the provisions of the Radiation Protection Act. (Attachment K)

Follow-up activity: Haller did not acquire a New Jersey license.

8. Type of enforcement activity: Notice of Prosecution

Issuing agent: NJDEP, DEQ

Date: July 5, 1988

Description of violation: Failure to acquire a valid New Jersey license for the radioactive material in possession pursuant to the provisions of the Radiation Protection Act. (Attachment N)

Follow-up activity: Haller did not acquire a New Jersey license.

9. **Type of enforcement activity:** Notice of Prosecution
Issuing agent: NJDEP, DEQ
Date: February 19, 1989
Description of violation: Failure to acquire a valid New Jersey license for the radioactive material in possession pursuant to the provisions of the Radiation Protection Act. (Attachment Q)

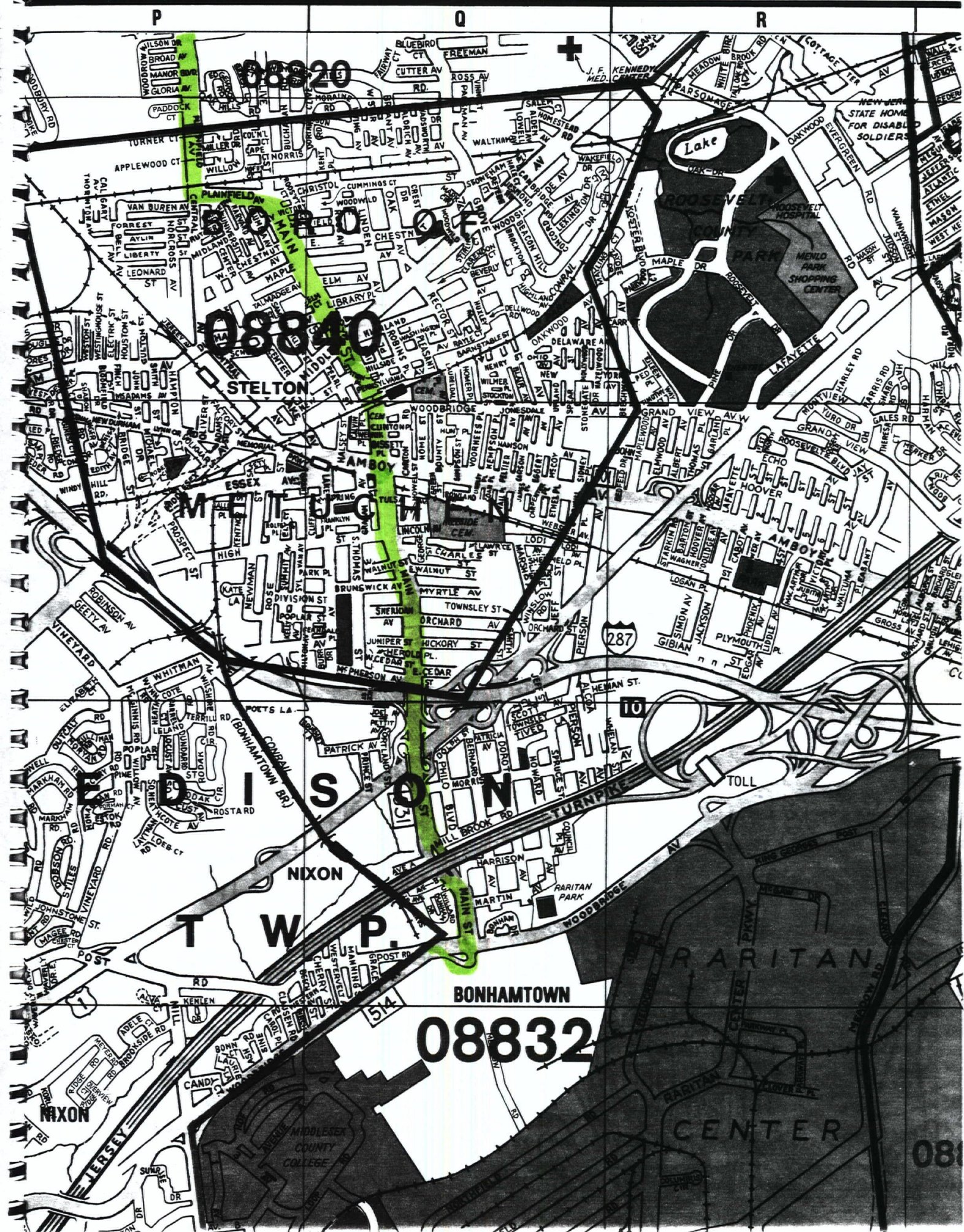
Follow-up activity: Haller applied for the license and paid the penalty fee of \$1,500.

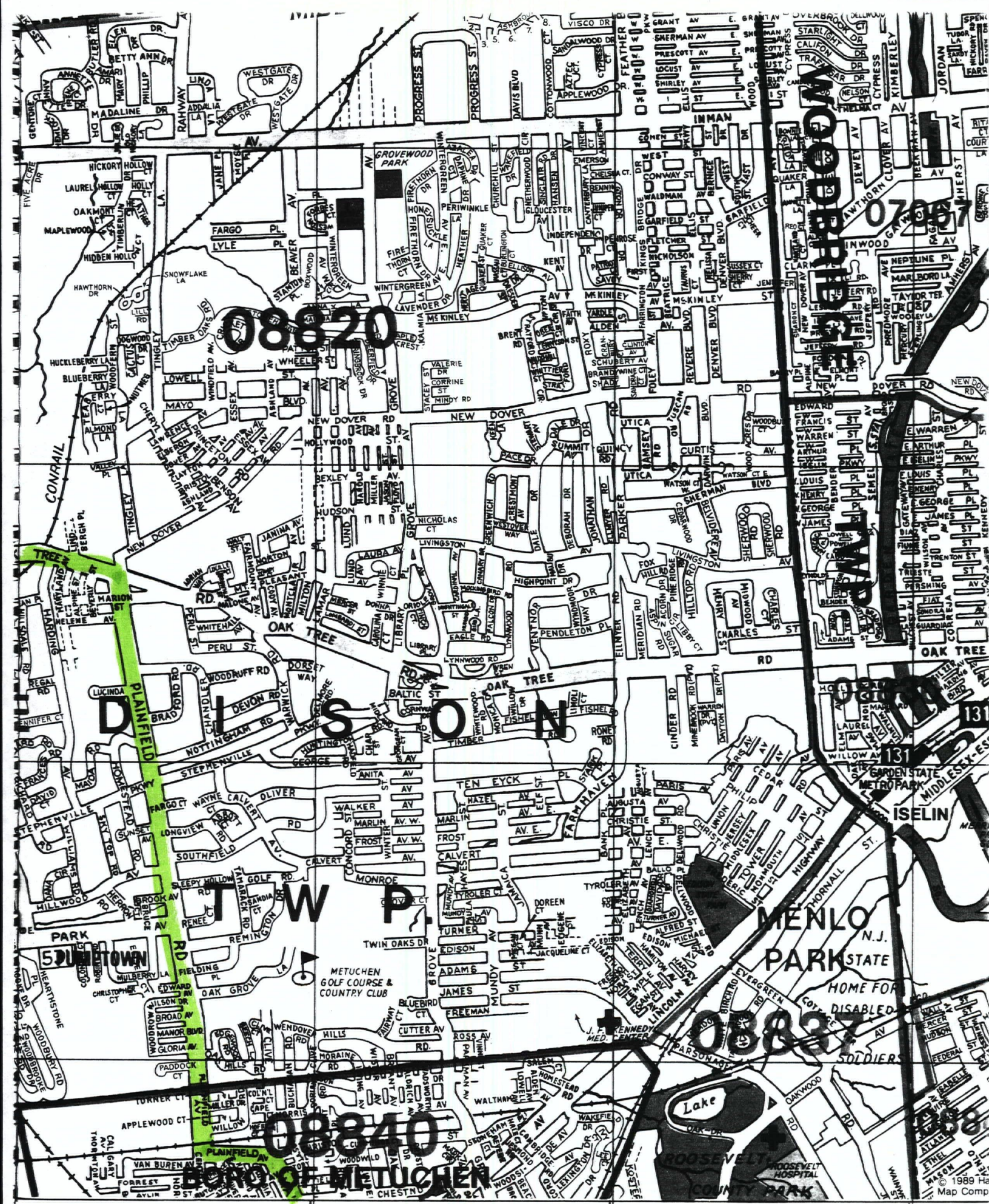
10. **Type of enforcement activity:** Notice of Prosecution
Issuing agent: NJDEP, DEQ
Date: December 12, 1990
Description of violation: Violations pursuant to the provisions of the Radiation Protection Act are as follows: unauthorized usage of ionizing radiation equipment, failure to conduct leak tests of sealed sources at intervals not longer than 6 months and failure to perform tests of radiation detection and monitoring instruments (calibration surveys) at the 6-month interval. (Attachment V)

Follow-up activity: There was no follow-up activity evident in the documentation.

11. **Type of enforcement activity:** Administrative Order
Issuing agent: NJDEPE, Division of Facility Wide Enforcement
Date: January 8, 1993
Description of violation: Failure to maintain an accurate accounting for all radioactive materials pursuant to the provisions of the Radiation Protection Act. (Attachment Z)

Follow-up activity: There was no follow-up activity evident in the documentation.





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FOR ADJOINING AREA SEE MAP NO. 11

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Map Comp



FOR ADJOINING AREA SEE MAP NO. 3

